

Approved Minutes of the Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
June 17, 2003

Members present:	Roger Thompson	Jeff Williams
	Spencer Harris	Steve Revell
	John Forcier	Craig Heindel
	Bernie Chenette	Barb Willis
	Rodney Pingree	Gail Center
	Alan Huizenga	Gerry Kittle

Others attending:	Frank O'Brien	Anne Whiteley
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Scheduled meetings:

August 19, 2003	1-4 PM	TAC	Mad Tom Room
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Review of Agenda –

The agenda was reviewed and the issue of the soils course was added for this meeting. Also added as topics for future meetings were easements, replacement area requirements for existing lots, and the elevation of Lake Champlain relative to setbacks from surface water. Also added was when water quality testing is required as part of the permitting process and for which elements.

Minutes-

The minutes were reviewed and there were no changes proposed. As part of the discussion of the minutes, John asked if it made sense to have some administrative person take the minutes instead of using Roger's time. Roger noted that this had been tried and it seemed that it saved little of his time, while using another person's time. John also raised the question of whether the minutes are biased because Roger is writing them. Steve asked if John was thinking the meetings should be recorded and transcribed. John said no. At this point the discussion was terminated on a suggestion from Alan that the committee take up the discussion related to Anne's redraft of the designer language because Anne needed to leave early.

Revisions to designer language

Anne presented the revisions to the language. She explained that she had reorganized the presentation to better align with the rest of the document and believed there was little if any substantive change. Anne indicated that we needed guidance from the PE Board on what needed to be submitted by engineers subject to section 1-313 (c). John asked if the water supply design should be limited to 600 GPD by non-engineers. It was decided that as long as the water supply was not classified as a public water supply the limit should be 1350 GPD which would match the limits on wastewater systems.

Roger asked about how sprinkler systems should be handled. They really don't have design flows the way a bedroom or employee does, yet there can be high GPM flows that can affect the main system, which should only be designed by engineers. It was agreed that Rodney and Roger would look into this and suggest an approach.

There was a question of whether a reviewer should be limited to only those projects that they could design. After some discussion it was decided that reviewing is different from designing and a large majority decided to remove the restriction Anne had written. Any engineer who disagrees with a technical decision made by a non-engineer has access in the current state rules to a second opinion by a state professional engineer.

The committee also discussed the inspection certifications and decided that inspections should be done by those approved to create the design. The thinking was that knowledge of the design principles is needed in order to determine if the as-built systems is within acceptable tolerances or to make recommendations to accept alterations from the approved plans.

There was discussion about the class nomenclature with class 1, class A, and class B categories. The rules require each group to be in a class and this approach seemed to not create any particular implications for engineers versus non-engineers and so the committee decided to use the proposed approach at least for now.

Soils Course –

John reviewed the course Sid Pilgrim is presenting at VTC. Three sessions have been completed and two more are scheduled. John expressed some concerns about Allison and Ray Dean's attitude when they attended the first session, saying that it appeared to him that they were seeking to gather data rather than listening to the professor. John said he was concerned that when Sid noted that the soil is often saturated above the highest mottling, maybe as much as 9", that the State staff would start saying the water table is 9" above the mottling. Spencer had on case where Ray appeared to be doing this but there has been no others that anyone is aware of. John was also concerned that when Sid asked Allison about how the information he had presented relative to the water table would be incorporated, Allison replied that the only thing that counts is where the mottling is. Roger replied that nothing the staff heard at the meeting should result in a more conservative approach from the state side. He noted that Allison's reply was based on explicit language in the rules and the only basis for discounting mottles is the ground water monitoring process given in the rules, except in rare cases where a clear case can be made for "relic" mottles.

The committee members who had attended Sid's course thought it was worthwhile. There appears to be a demand for a more comprehensive training course as well.

John also mentioned that he had attended a meeting of the ACEC Board the previous evening. Mike Quaid, former state representative, is a new member of the PE Board and is keeping track of issues related to the soils knowledge requirements.

The next P.E. Board meeting will be July 17, 2003 where they hope to deal with the issues related to having engineers certified as meeting the soils knowledge requirements.

Legislative Update –

Roger outlined the language in H.319 related to agricultural fairs and equine exhibitions and in the Capital bill on outdoor seating at seasonal restaurants. The new alternative toilet guidance includes a section on agricultural fairs and equine exhibitions based on the legislation.

Notice with Property Tax Bills –

The Department wrote the language and the Tax Department will print and distribute the notices to all towns. There was a minor legislative change that made it voluntary for towns to include the notice but the Agency is hopeful that most will do it. If most towns do, the message will spread so that almost everyone will hear of it.

Innovative Systems Update –

Frank has sent a draft general use permit out on the Spec AIRR system, which he distributed to the committee.

Frank also talked about the request by the manufacturer of the Infiltrator leaching chambers for a reduction in size based on the so-called “shadowing effect” of systems using crushed stone. Frank noted that the company had submitted a couple of reports supporting the claim. He said he had also found a couple of reports that did not support the claim. The committee members were somewhat split on the “shadowing” effect. A report published in the Small Flows Quarterly titled In-ground Dispersal of Wastewater Effluent: The Science of Getting Water into the Ground was discussed. Craig suggested that it would be good to get a soil physicist such as Fred Magdoff or maybe Sid Pilgrim who could help review these issues.

Feedback –

Craig said he had worked with the regional office staff on a couple of difficult sites recently and the process seemed to go smoothly.